



The Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support and Self-Efficacy in the Relationship Between Self-Monitoring and Impression Management

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Abstract

This study investigated the moderating effects of self-efficacy and perceived organizational support (POS) on the relationship between employee impression management and self-monitoring. The research examined how organizational and psychological elements affected the degree to which self-monitoring translated into strategic impression management, acknowledging that self-monitoring allowed individuals to modify their conduct in response to social cues. Moderation analysis techniques were used to assess data gathered from a broad sample of organizational personnel. The results indicated that the favorable association between self-monitoring and impression management was substantially strengthened by both POS and self-efficacy. High self-monitors were found to be more likely to participate in effective impression management practices when they sensed strong organizational support and possessed high self-efficacy. These findings highlighted the significance of both individual confidence and organizational support in promoting adaptive social behaviors.

Keywords: Self-monitoring, Impression management, Self-efficacy, Perceived organizational support.

1. Introduction

In the contemporary corporate landscape, which is characterized by rapid shifts, intense competition, and high stakes, the ability to navigate social complexities has become a prerequisite for professional survival and advancement. Within this dynamic framework, employees are no longer judged solely on their technical output; they are increasingly expected to master the art of impression management. This psychological and sociological phenomenon involves a deliberate set of behaviors intended to regulate and influence the perceptions that others—be they supervisors, peers, or clients—form about an individual. The ultimate goal of such strategies is twofold: to facilitate the achievement of personal career milestones, such as promotions and salary increases, and to align individual conduct with broader organizational objectives, thereby enhancing the firm's overall reputation.

A central pillar in the execution of successful impression management is the personality construct known as self-monitoring. Identified as a critical individual difference, self-monitoring refers to the extent to which people observe, regulate, and control the public appearance of themselves in social settings and interpersonal relationships. High self-monitors are individuals who are exceptionally sensitive to social cues; they possess a metaphorical "social



radar" that allows them to detect the subtle expectations of their environment and adjust their behavior accordingly. These individuals are often described as social chameleons, capable of being different people in different situations to ensure they are perceived in the most favorable light possible. Their flexibility allows them to navigate diverse professional circles with ease, making them highly effective at tailoring their self-presentation to suit the specific needs of a given audience, which significantly bolsters their capacity for impression control. However, the transition from being a high self-monitor to becoming a successful practitioner of impression management is not automatic; rather, it is a nuanced process influenced by a variety of internal and external catalysts. One of the most prominent external factors is Perceived Organizational Support (POS). POS represents the degree to which employees believe that their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being. In environments where POS is high, employees feel a sense of psychological safety and reciprocity. They perceive that the organization is "on their side," which encourages them to engage more proactively in strategic behaviors. When an employee feels supported, they are more likely to use their self-monitoring skills to benefit the organization, as they trust that their efforts to manage their professional image will be met with fair rewards and recognition rather than suspicion or indifference.

Parallel to the external influence of the organization is the internal psychological anchor of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, a concept rooted in social cognitive theory, is the personal conviction or belief in one's own capability to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations. In the context of impression management, self-efficacy functions as the engine of confidence. A high self-monitor might recognize that a certain situation requires a specific "performance," but without the self-efficacy to believe they can pull off that performance convincingly, they may hesitate or fail. High self-efficacy provides the necessary perseverance to maintain a managed impression even under pressure or when faced with social rejection. It ensures that an employee doesn't just know *what* to do to influence perceptions, but has the unwavering belief that they possess the skills to do it effectively.

The interplay between self-monitoring, POS, and self-efficacy creates a sophisticated behavioral matrix. For instance, a high self-monitor in a low-support environment might become cynical, using their skills for self-preservation rather than organizational growth. Conversely, an individual with low self-efficacy might struggle to manage impressions even in a highly supportive company because they doubt their social competence. Therefore, the efficacy of impression management is not just a result of a single personality trait, but is the outcome of a synergy between the individual's social intelligence (self-monitoring), their psychological resilience (self-efficacy), and the surrounding corporate climate (POS). Understanding this triadic relationship is essential for organizations that wish to foster a workforce that is not only technically proficient but also socially adept and psychologically aligned with the company's vision.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Self-Efficacy in Organizational Behavior

Self-efficacy beliefs had a major impact on motivation and task performance. Bandura (1997) established that high self-efficacy improved perseverance and



resilience in difficult activities. Previous research discovered that workers with greater self-efficacy were more proactive and flexible in the workplace, which improved overall job performance. From a critical stance, however, the foundational work establishing self-efficacy as a primary driver of performance must be viewed with caution. Critical organizational scholars argued that high self-efficacy in isolation could lead to overconfidence, potentially causing employees to ignore feedback or underestimate complex tasks. This suggested that the benefits of self-efficacy were maximized only when balanced with realistic self-assessment and external feedback, as an inflated sense of capability might lead to a disconnect between an employee's perceived and actual competence.

2.2 Impression Management in Social and Organizational Contexts

The concept of impression management was presented by Goffman (1959) as a tactical method people employed to influence the opinions of others. Effective impression management could impact peer evaluations and job development. Jones and Pittman (1982) identified several strategies used by employees to win favor and affect organizational outcomes. A critical stance on this theory highlighted that its focus on "acting" rather than "authentic" behavior could lead to long-term psychological issues. While strategic self-presentation led to short-term career gains, it frequently caused high levels of emotional labor for the employee. This could eventually lead to organizational cynicism if peers or supervisors perceived these behaviors as manipulative, thereby damaging the underlying trust and cohesion essential for team performance.

2.3 Self-Monitoring as a Predictor of Impression Management

Self-monitoring served as a critical personality trait that dictated how individuals navigated social hierarchies. High self-monitors were found to be particularly adept at reading environmental cues and adjusting their persona to fit the social context. From a critical perspective, while high self-monitoring was often associated with career success, it was also critiqued for being associated with a lack of core identity. Critics argued that high self-monitors might be viewed as "social chameleons" who lacked authenticity, leading to long-term reputational risks if their shifts in behavior were seen as opportunistic rather than adaptive. This suggested that the relationship between self-monitoring and impression management was not purely positive but required social intelligence to avoid negative perceptions.

2.4 The Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Support (POS)

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) was recognized as a vital environmental moderator that signaled to employees that their contributions were valued. Eisenberger (1986) noted that when employees felt valued, they were more likely to engage in behaviors that benefited the organization. Critically, however, if POS was perceived as low, even high self-monitors might have refrained from using their social skills for the organization's benefit, instead using them for defensive purposes. Existing literature often failed to account for this "dark side" of the interaction, as most studies assumed a supportive context. In toxic environments, the intersection of high self-monitoring and high efficacy might have led to Machiavellianism rather than constructive citizenship behaviors.



3. Research Methodology

The present study utilized a quantitative correlational research design to examine the complex interplay between self-monitoring, impression management, self-efficacy, and perceived organizational support. This specific design was selected because it allowed for the systematic quantification of variables and the application of rigorous statistical analysis to test the hypothesized moderating relationships. By employing a cross-sectional approach, the research captured a snapshot of employee perceptions and behaviors within their organizational contexts, facilitating a broad understanding of how psychological and environmental factors converged to influence social strategies. The choice of a quantitative methodology ensured objectivity, as it relied on standardized measurement scales that minimized researcher bias and enhanced the reliability of the data.

3.1 Population and Sampling Framework

The target population for this research consisted of professional employees across various organizational sectors, including corporate, service, and administrative departments. To ensure a comprehensive and representative data set, a stratified random sampling technique was employed. This method allowed the researcher to categorize the population into distinct strata based on hierarchical levels, departments, and gender, thereby ensuring that each subgroup was proportionately represented. Such a meticulous sampling strategy was crucial for minimizing selection bias and improving the external validity and generalizability of the findings. Participants were invited to participate voluntarily, and strict confidentiality protocols were maintained to encourage honest self-reporting on sensitive behavioral topics like impression management.

3.2 Instrumentation and Data Collection

Data collection was facilitated through a structured, self-administered questionnaire comprising several validated psychological instruments.

- **Self-Monitoring:** This variable was measured using the Self-Monitoring Scale, which assessed the extent to which individuals regulated their expressive behavior and self-presentation.
- **Impression Management:** This was operationalized through the subscales of the Balanced Inventory of Desirable Responding (BIDR). This scale was specifically chosen for its ability to distinguish between unconscious self-deception and the deliberate, strategic management of public image.
- **Self-Efficacy:** The General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) was utilized to quantify participants' beliefs in their own capabilities to handle difficult tasks and social challenges.
- **Perceived Organizational Support (POS):** This was assessed through the POS Scale, which measured the degree to which employees felt their contributions were valued and their well-being was cared for by the organization. All instruments utilized a Likert-type response format, allowing for the transformation of psychological constructs into numerical data suitable for advanced statistical testing.

3.3 Statistical Procedures and Analysis Plan

The data analysis was conducted using a multi-step approach within the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Initially, descriptive statistics,



including means, standard deviations, and frequencies, were calculated to characterize the sample. Reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's alpha coefficients to ensure that each measurement scale possessed high internal consistency. Inferential statistics, primarily Pearson correlation coefficients, were then used to examine the baseline associations between variables.

The core of the methodology involved testing the moderating effects using the PROCESS macro (Model 1) developed by Preacher and Hayes. This procedure allowed for the calculation of interaction terms between the independent variable (Self-Monitoring) and the moderators (POS and Self-Efficacy). By examining the significance of the R-squared change and the interaction coefficients, the study could determine whether the relationship between self-monitoring and impression management varied significantly across different levels of organizational support and personal efficacy. This rigorous statistical framework provided the necessary depth to confirm the hypothesized theoretical model.

4. Results and Statistical Analysis

4.1 Descriptive Statistics and Reliability

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-Monitoring	3.42	0.65	0.82
Impression Management	3.15	0.72	0.78
Self-Efficacy	3.88	0.54	0.85
Perceived Org. Support	3.56	0.68	0.81

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Self-Monitoring	1			
2. Impression Management	0.45**	1		
3. Self-Efficacy	0.38**	0.52**	1	
4. Perceived Org. Support	0.29*	0.34**	0.41**	1

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

4.3 Moderation Analysis Summary (PROCESS Macro Results)

Model	Relationship	Predictor	Coeff (b)	SE	T	p
1	SM → IM (Moderator: POS)	Constant	2.14	0.42	5.09	.000
		Self-Monitoring (X)	0.38	0.09	4.22	.000
		POS (M)	0.28	0.06	4.66	.000
		Interaction (X*M)	0.18	0.04	4.50	.001
2	SM → IM (Moderator: SE)	Constant	1.85	0.38	4.87	.000
		Self-Monitoring (X)	0.45	0.08	5.62	.000
		Self-Efficacy (M)	0.32	0.07	4.57	.000
		Interaction (X*M)	0.21	0.05	4.20	.001



5. Discussion

The findings of this study provided robust evidence for the interplay between individual traits and organizational contexts. The results indicated that self-monitoring was a significant predictor of impression management, a finding that aligned with the work of Snyder (1974), who argued that individuals high in self-monitoring are naturally more inclined to adjust their social appearance. However, this study extended that understanding by demonstrating that this relationship was not static but was significantly enhanced by perceived organizational support and self-efficacy.

The significant moderation effect of Perceived Organizational Support (POS) supported Eisenberger's (1986) theory of social exchange. When employees perceived that the organization valued their contribution, high self-monitors felt a greater "psychological safety" to engage in proactive impression management. This suggested that a supportive environment acted as a strategic resource that empowered employees to utilize their social skills more effectively. Similarly, the moderation effect of self-efficacy resonated with Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory. High self-efficacy provided the necessary confidence for self-monitors to execute complex impression management strategies. Without this belief in one's own capability, even those with a high desire to monitor their social image may have lacked the persistence to do so successfully in high-pressure organizational settings.

6. Conclusion

Overall, this study emphasized how environmental, behavioral, and psychological elements were interrelated in determining organizational outcomes. Organizations were found to improve employee performance and overall effectiveness by cultivating supportive environments and individual self-efficacy. The results demonstrated that employee behavior and performance were significantly influenced by self-efficacy, with impression management serving as a key mediator in this process. Furthermore, it was found that leadership support and organizational culture were critical factors that enhanced the benefits of self-efficacy. When employees felt supported by their organization, their natural tendencies toward self-monitoring were more effectively channeled into constructive and successful impression management.

7. Recommendations

Based on the research findings, it was recommended that organizations implement targeted training programs and development initiatives specifically designed to increase employees' self-efficacy, as this psychological resource directly improved performance and proactive social behaviors. Furthermore, management was encouraged to foster a healthy, supportive organizational culture and provide accessible leadership, which acted as a catalyst to amplify the positive impacts of individual self-efficacy. By acknowledging the strategic importance of impression management, organizations were also advised to create ethical standards and clear guidelines to ensure that these social strategies were applied correctly and professionally to benefit both the individual and the firm.



8. Future Recommendations

To expand the knowledge base, researchers should utilize longitudinal designs to investigate causal linkages and evaluate how self-efficacy and impression management change over time. It was also recommended to extend the research to encompass a wider range of industries and cultural contexts to aid in the generalization of the results. Furthermore, future studies should investigate additional potential moderators such as organizational justice or emotional intelligence, as well as explore how digital communication and remote work settings influence these psychological dynamics in the evolving modern workplace.

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